

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OPEN SESSION
ILLINOIS GAMING BOARD
APRIL 8, 2008
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

NOTE: ITEMS IN **BOLDFACE PRINT** REFLECT OFFICIAL BOARD ACTIONS

On Tuesday, April 8, 2008 a Special Meeting of the Illinois Gaming Board ("Board") was held in the conference room of the Gaming Board Offices on the 3rd floor at 160 N. LaSalle, Chicago, Illinois.

On Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. the following Board Members were present: Chairman Aaron Jaffe, Members Charles Gardner, Eugene Winkler, James Sullivan and Joseph Moore.

At 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 Chairman Jaffe called the meeting to order. Pursuant to Section 2(c), paragraphs (1), (4), (11), (14) and (21) of the Open Meetings Act and Section 6(d) of the Riverboat Gambling Act, Member Gardner moved that **the Board retire to Closed Session to discuss the items listed under Closed Session on today's agenda and relating to the following subject matters:**

- 1. Pending Litigation and matters involving probable litigation;**
- 2. Investigations concerning applicants and licensees;**
- 3. Personnel matters; and**
- 4. Closed session minutes.**

Member Winkler seconded the motion. The Board approved the motion unanimously by roll call vote. The Board remained in Closed Session until approximately 10:00 a.m. The Board went into open session at 10:10 a.m.

Roll call was taken at the start of the open session with Chairman Jaffe, Members Gardner, Winkler, Sullivan and Moore present.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT –

The Chairman announced that Luis Tigera was named the Commander of Region 1 with the Illinois State Police and Bruce Banks will be formally introduced at the Regular April meeting as the new Deputy Administrator of Enforcement.

4. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS –

5. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT –

6. BOARD POLICY ITEMS –

- 24 Hour Gaming

The presentations for all who spoke during public commentary are at the back of the minutes.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENTARY -**

- Anita R. Bedell, Executive Director, Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

See Attached

- Tom Swoik, Executive Director, Illinois Casino Gaming Association

See Attached

Member Sullivan asked if there is a way to track people who are in over their heads and are on the premises 24 hours a day gambling. Tom Swoik stated that under current law there is no legal premise on making a patron leave because they are gambling beyond their means.

Mike Fries asked Tom Swoik if there was any data to establish a connection between 24 hour gaming and problem gambling. Swoik stated that there was no relationship between the issues. Winkler asked about any research or study comparing 24 hour gaming to a person's addiction to gambling and there was no study done in the United States or Canada.

Member Gardner stated that casinos can make an estimate on what effect 24 hour gaming would have on the economic factor. The big issue is revenue to the State, how much of an increase in revenue would 24 hour gaming produce for the State.

Member Gardner also asked if there was a limit on hours of operation within the Act. Tom Swoik and Mike Fries stated that when the Act was enacted, it read 24-hour gaming, with the Administrator having the authority to allow 24 hour gaming. It is not a rule that the hours be less than 24 hours.

- Jeannie Evans, Task Force to Oppose the Expansion of Gambling in Chicago

See Attached

Ms. Evans stated that gambling goes hand in hand with drinking, drugs, tax fraud and identity fraud.

Member Gardner asked Ms. Evans if she had comments on whether the alcohol consumption would rise if there were a 24 hour gaming day. Ms. Evans stated that she did not have a comment on that.

Mike Fries asked what was the basis of the statement that Ms. Evans made that only a problem gambler would utilize the additional gambling hours. She stated that a normal person would not gamble in the middle of the night. Mr. Fries also asked about the comment that she made "there are drug dealers in casinos". Ms. Evans stated that her data came from her brother who is a resident of California and frequents the casinos in California. Ms. Evans stated that she is assuming that the same would occur in Illinois.

Member Gardner stated that Ms. Evans made quite an assumption that only problem gamblers gamble in the early hours of the morning. He stated that many people prefer to gamble in the early hours.

- Jerry Prosapio, Gaming Exposed

See Attached

- Chris Anderson, Wilmette Psychotherapy Associates

Mr. Anderson stated that before this Board was appointed, he was asked by the Governor to be a consultant to the Gaming Board regarding compulsive gambling. Mr. Anderson has spoken before the Gaming Board several times. He stated that gambling was put on the riverboats to protect people from gambling beyond their means, which means that when the boats were cruising gamblers were only allowed to gamble for two hours. Then the decision was made to allow the riverboats to be stationary rather than cruise. The point that is being made here is that gambling will always be a problem and we must not allow 24 hour gambling.

- Bette M. Thomas

Former Mayor of the City of North Chicago, which is located 40 miles north of Chicago.

Ms. Thomas is not in favor of 24 hour gambling. Ms. Thomas stated that 24 hour gaming would not be welcome in her community. People are spending their money gambling rather than paying their bills or purchasing their medicines. Young children are playing dice in the alleys instead of participating in school functions. Ms. Thomas stated that she does not think gambling 24 hours a day would not be the answer to increase revenue for the State of Illinois.

- Kathy Gilroy

See Attached

- Nancy Duel

See Attached

- Alex Roseborough, Executive Director, Illinois Council on Problem Gambling

Mr. Roseborough went on to state that the Casino Queen and the Alton Belle allowed the organization of Chestnut Health Systems to man booths at two casino facilities (Casino Queen and Alton) during the week of National Problem Gambling Awareness Week.

There are thousands of problem gamblers in the State of Illinois. The majority who participate in gambling are responsible but there are many that are not very responsible. Expanding hours will most definitely have a negative affect to many people.

- Rev. Claude R. King, First United Methodist Church

Rev. King addressed the Board stating that the casino should cut back their hours instead of opening gaming to a 24 hour day. Many lives are affected when a problem gambler strikes. Much is lost to the problem gambler, not only money but families.

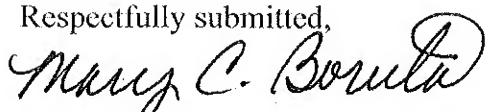
- Rev. Alexander Sharp, Executive Director of Protestants for the Common Good

Our organization has taken a strong stand against gambling. The whole family structure is affected by the problem gambler. Children are deeply affected when their parents are problem gamblers. Gambling 24 hours a day will deeply affect our future adults. Please give special consideration to the health and well being of the children.

4. **ADJOURN** –

At 11:20 a.m. Member Winkler motioned reconvene into closed session while Member Sullivan seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary C. Boruta

Secretary to the Administrator

Illinois Gaming Board Special Hearing of April 8, 2008

Public Comments of Anita Bedell

Executive Director of Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

I want to thank the Board for holding a special hearing on the proposal to allow 24 hour gambling at Illinois casinos. This is a very important public policy issue, and I thank you for taking the time to allow the public comment before making your decision.

The Illinois Gaming Board was set up to regulate a business that has known problems associated with it. Some people will lose everything they own gambling. That is why the Illinois General Assembly originally limited casino gambling to riverboats—the cruises had a beginning and ending time and gambling could not be conducted while the riverboat was docked.

This is the third time the casinos have asked the Illinois Gaming Board to approve 24 hour gambling in Illinois. In 1999 the request was withdrawn. In 2003, the Gaming Board denied the request for 24/7 gambling. At that time there were approximately 900 gamblers on the Self-Exclusion list. Friday, there were 5,711 addicted gamblers on the Self-Exclusion list—an increase of 250%. I come before you today and ask that you deny the request for all 24 hour gambling, even for those who are requesting 24 hour gambling only on week-ends and holidays.

Many addicted gamblers will continue to gamble until all of their money is gone—well over 24 hours. I know one family whose son committed suicide after losing his rent money at Illinois casinos. Larry had once gambled for 30 hours at a casino in Wisconsin. His parents said, “If you keep the casinos open constantly, it will increase the odds of someone like Larry to either start an addiction or to evolve past the point of recovery. Those extra two hours of action might simply be a convenience for some, but it will be a death sentence to others. So please, don’t do this.”

On June 23, 2002 a bus driver who went on a 48 hour gambling spree crashed a commercial bus killing 5 people. They were returning from a week-end trip to a casino in Niagara Falls, Canada.

In December, 2003, Bally's paid \$50,000 for several violations in its haste to transact finances for a high roller who was playing \$100 slot machines for more than 81 hours over a long weekend three years earlier.

Last month an addicted gambler filed a law suit against 6 Atlantic City casinos and one in Las Vegas. She would gamble for 4 or 5 days straight without sleeping, and sometimes passing out at the tables. During one 5-day gambling binge in 2005 she existed on nothing but plastic cups of orange juice and Snickers bars that staff gave her. On the fifth day, she said a dealer told her to go home because she appeared exhausted and unable to keep track of the cards she was playing. (Newsday.com, March 8, 2008) With more shift changes, how would the staff even know she had been at the casino non-stop?

Bill K., who lost \$1 million gambling in Atlantic City casinos, told me that until 1991 Atlantic City casinos were only open 16 hours a day. Today the casinos are open 24/7, and "if you want to see pathological gambling in full bloom, take a stroll through the casinos during those extra hours".

I have a letter from Clarence Rack. He was hoping to speak before the Board today, but he missed the deadline by 10 minutes. He spoke before the Gaming Board in 2003 after he learned that his home was in foreclosure. His wife was an addicted gambler, but she would not sign up for the Self-Exclusion Program and continues to gamble.

Clarence asked me to tell you the negative impact gambling has had on his family, because 24 hour gambling will impact many more families—divorce, applying for lunch programs and financial aid for school and being denied because he made too much money, going to the food pantry to feed his children, and the high level of stress on the family. The children have lost their mother—she only sees them on holidays. His oldest daughter was accepted at several universities, but they were unable to finance her education, so she attends a Junior college and works at a part time job.

Most people drive to Illinois casinos, some of which are located in densely populated areas. Allowing 24 hour gambling and drinking at casinos will impact public safety. According to Dr. Valerie Lorenz, a pioneer in treatment for gambling addiction in Baltimore Maryland, addicted gamblers drive like drunk drivers. Addicted gamblers seem more hurried and take more risks during their heavier gambling activity. Common civil violations include speeding, reckless driving, driving without a license or suspended license, no insurance, and driving under unsafe conditions.

The combination of alcohol and gambling has lead to serious suicide attempts. I have talked with gambling addicts who close their eyes while driving in the hopes that they will have a car crash and their families will be able to collect money from the insurance policy.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS GAMING BOARD
24-HOUR GAMING
APRIL 8, 2008

Presentation by Tom Swoik

GOOD MORNING. I AM HERE THIS MORNING ON BEHALF OF ALL OF THE OPERATING CASINOS IN THE STATE AND WE APPRECIATE THE BOARD'S DECISION TO TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE ISSUE OF 24 HOUR GAMING AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THE INDUSTRY'S POSITION ON THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE. DUE TO THE UNITY OF THE INDUSTRY ON THIS ISSUE, AND IN THE INTEREST OF TIME, IT WAS DECIDED THAT I WOULD BE THE SOLE PRESENTER ON BEHALF OF THE INDUSTRY. FROM THE LOOKS OF THE AGENDA, WE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, BUT MY SOLE PRESENCE HERE SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS A LACK OF INTEREST OR CONCERN BY THE INDUSTRY.

THE ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD IS WHETHER ALLOWING GAMING 24 HOURS A DAY WILL MEET THE GOALS OF THE GAMING STATUTE. WE ARE NOT HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS THE PROS AND CONS OF GAMING. THE LEGISLATURE PASSED THE RIVERBOAT GAMBLING ACT OVER 18 YEARS AGO AND DID NOT LIMIT GAMING TO LESS THAN 24 HOURS.

THE LEGISLATIVE INTENT OF THAT ACT IN PART STATES:

THIS ACT IS INTENDED TO BENEFIT THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS BY ASSISTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTING ILLINOIS TOURISM AND BY INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF REVENUES AVAILABLE TO THE STATE TO ASSIST AND SUPPORT EDUCATION."

24-HOUR GAMING HAS NOT BEEN PERSUED SINCE THE EARLY 2000'S, HOWEVER THE ECONOMIC CHANGES OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE NECESSITATED OUR REVIEW OF ALL POSSIBLE AREAS THAT COULD HELP INCREASE REVENUES AND KEEP JOBS.

THE REVENUES OF THE CASINOS AND THEREFORE THE SUPPORT TO THE STATE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN NEGATIVELY IMPACTED TO A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE BY THE SMOKING BAN. IN JANUARY WE SAW REVENUES FALL BY 17.46 %, IN FEBRUARY THEY FELL BY 12.88% AND LAST MONTH BY 19.87%. THE STATEWIDE AVERAGES ARE SOMEWHAT MISLEADING BECAUSE THEY DO NOT TAKE INTO EFFECT THE 25% PLUS INCREASES THE CASINO QUEEN SAW FROM AUGUST TO DECEMBER AND FEBRUARY HAD 29 DAYS THIS YEAR, THEREFORE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS HAVE BEEN EVEN GREATER.

SOME WILL SAY THE DECREASES WERE CAUSED BY WEATHER AND THE ECONOMIC CLIMATE. HOWEVER, IF YOU COMPARE THE JANUARY REVENUES FOR THE FOUR NORTHERN ILLINOIS CASINOS WITH THE NORTHERN INDIANA

CASINOS ILLINOIS' DECREASE WAS STILL ABOUT 10% DROP HIGHER THAN INDIANA'S AND THEY HAD THE SAME WEATHER AND ECONOMIC CLIMATE THAT WE HAD. ADDITIONALLY, WEATHER IN MARCH WAS NOT MUCH OF A FACTOR AND WE EXPERIENCED THE BIGGEST MONTHLY DECREASE TO DATE.

IN RESPONSE TO THIS DROP IN REVENUES THE CASINO INDUSTRY MUST LOOK AT MANY OPTIONS TO REMAIN PROFITABLE. RATHER THAN SIMPLY CUTTING COSTS AND POTENTIALLY JOBS, WE ARE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO INCREASE REVENUES TO US, THE STATE AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES. ONE WAY IS TO INCREASE OUR HOURS OF OPERATION. THIS IS NOT EXPANSION OF GAMING, THERE ARE NO NEW FACILITIES, THERE ARE NOT ADDITIONAL POSITIONS, THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A POSITIVE BUSINESS DECISION AND BETTER UTILIZE WHAT IS AVAILABLE. IN ADDITION TO ALLOWING SMOKING, SOME TYPE OF 24 HOUR GAMING IS ALREADY AVAILABLE FOR OUR COMPETITORS IN INDIANA, MISSOURI AND IOWA.

SOME WILL SAY BEING OPEN 24 HOURS WILL HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR EFFORTS TO THWART COMPULSIVE GAMBLING, WE, ALONG WITH BENSINGER DUPONT AND ASSOCIATES, HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND ANY RESEARCH OR DATA WHICH SUPPORTS SUCH A CONCLUSION.

SOME WILL SAY BEING OPEN 24 HOURS WILL CAUSE DRINKING PROBLEMS, IGB RULES CURRENTLY ALLOW US TO SERVE LIQUOR ONLY FROM 9:30 A.M. TO 4:00 A.M. OR UNTIL 1 HOUR BEFORE CLOSING IF CLOSING IS BEFORE 4:00 A.M. ADDITIONALLY, ELGIN FOR EXAMPLE IS RESTRICTED BY LOCAL ORDINANCE AND MUST REMOVE ALL LIQUOR BY 4:00 A.M. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE SUCH RULES WILL CHANGE.

I BELIEVE THE BOARD HAS RECEIVED OR WILL RECEIVE LETTERS FROM SOME LOCAL OFFICIALS SUPPORTING THE 24-HOUR CONCEPT BECAUSE AS WE HAVE SEEN IN SEVERAL NEWS ARTICLES THE DECREASES IN REVENUES ARE AFFECTING THEIR LOCAL BUDGETS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE HOW MUCH OF A REVENUE INCREASE 24-HOUR GAMING WILL GENERATE BECAUSE OF THE INCREMENTAL REVENUE DECREASES RELATED TO THE SMOKING BAN, WHETHER AUTHORIZATON MAY INCLUDE ONLY WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS AND HOW ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE IT MAY BE FOR SOME PROPERTIES. IF PAST EXPERIENCE IS A GUIDE, WE DO KNOW THAT INCREASE HOURS WILL LEAD TO INCREASE REVENUES.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT AND YOUR CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE 24 HOUR GAMING.

Jeannie Evans
773-816-6414
jeannieyevans@post.harvard.edu
1411 E. 54th Place, Chicago, IL 60615

Member, Task Force to Oppose the Expansion of Gambling in Chicago
Member, ILCAAAP
Member, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Comments for Gaming Board Hearing on 24-hour Gambling
April 8, 2008

I don't know anyone who is happy when their relatives are out late gambling. I have two relatives who have had problems with gambling. When they are out late gambling, family members feel concern, stress, anger, and frustration, and they want their loved one to come home. A casino closing time provides an opportunity for problem gamblers to walk away from the table and return to their homes and their responsibilities.

If we care about our society, then we care about individuals' lives. We care about relationships, and we care about families. Twenty-four-hour gambling would not support families, but rather would increase the strain on families associated with problem gambling.

While considering what I might say to you, I called my brother who has a lot of friends who gamble. He agreed that a casino closing is helpful for compulsive gamblers. He told me of his friend Jonathan who has a gambling problem, and hence is never able to save any money. After a car accident at age 16, Jonathan received a \$7,000 settlement. He took his \$7,000 to a casino near where he lives in California. The casino was open 24-hours a day, and Jonathan gambled non-stop for three days, until all his money was gone. At this point, he called my brother to ask for a ride home. When my brother arrived, Jonathan asked to borrow \$100 so he could continue gambling.

My brother also suggested I speak with his friend Tommy who works at a horse race track in California. Based on his experience, Tommy agreed that closing time was important. He said he sees lots of people who gamble more than they should, and need some external help to stop gambling. The track Tommy works at opens at 10:00 am, and closes at 9:00 am the following morning. Tommy said the problem is that a local casino is open 24-hours a day, so gamblers leave the track at 9:00 and head over to the casino. He suggested that it is important that all the gambling establishments close at the same time period, so that compulsive gamblers are more likely to actually stop gambling for a period of time.

I believe that Illinois gambling establishments should close for part of the day, and that they should close concurrently.

Because of the problems associated with gambling, I oppose any expansion of gambling, including any expansion of hours casinos may operate.

Jonathan accessed funds for gambling through identity fraud. His parents had put his \$7,000 settlement money into a trust fund until he was 18. At age 17, Jonathan fabricated a fake ID and managed to prematurely access the \$7,000 from the legal trustee. Jonathan didn't just gamble during the three days at the casino, he was also offered drinks, and he drank alcohol around the clock. He also bought drugs from the drug dealers who are easy to find in casinos. By all accounts, Jonathan looked and felt terrible at the end of his three days in the casino. His gambling added tension to his relationship with his parents.

Tommy has a legal job at a race track, but he is surrounded by and participates in illicit activities. In California, gamblers who win over a certain amount are required to deduct taxes and sign relevant tax forms. Although the taxes have already been deducted, many gamblers do not want the paper trail associated with signing the tax documents. Tommy offers to sign for them in exchange for a 10% cut of their winnings. Tommy also makes a point of collecting many losing tickets. At tax time, Tommy offsets all the winnings he signed for with more than enough of the losing tickets he collected, and ends up collecting a sizable tax refund from the government.

My point with these stories is that when I speak to people who gamble a lot, they cannot seem to speak of gambling without speaking of the shady dealings associated with gambling – in these cases drugs, alcohol, identity fraud, tax fraud, and strained family relationships.

I urge you not to expand gambling, the hours people can gamble, or the harms associated with gambling in Illinois.

Thank you,

Jeannie Evans

Jeannie Evans

Gambling Exposed!

Revealing truth. Bringing hope and healing.
www.GamblingExposed.org

My name is Jerry Prosapio, and I am co-founder of Gambling Exposed. Gambling Exposed is an educational entity designed to reveal the truths of the impact that gambling has on our society. I am also a former compulsive gambler who knows first-hand the destruction that this addiction can produce. My addiction to gambling started with a \$2.00 daily double horse racing bet that won and paid \$80.00. I was hooked with that first win. Thirteen years later, the results of my addiction were the following:

1. Excessive loans and cash advances on 17 credit cards.
2. Loss of 2 businesses with double bankruptcies (both business and personal) totaling well into the 6 figures.
3. Illegal loans with the Mafia, which resulted in a terrifying and unexpected home visit to my wife and my then baby son.
4. Jeopardizing again the life of my infant son while leaving him unattended in a vehicle as I went to meet someone inside a bar in order to pay off my gambling debt.
5. Tremendous undue stress on my wife and marriage. My wife, although able to function and still go to work at the height of my addiction, was, I am convinced, close to a nervous breakdown.
6. Thoughts of ending it all. On my final plane trip home from a casino (flying then under a false name), I thought it would be best if the pilot would just crash the plane.

It is by the grace of God that I have been free of gambling for the past 25 years. For the first 16 of those 25 years, from 1983 to 1999, I regularly attended Gamblers Anonymous. In 1983, my first year in the program, there were 12 Gamblers Anonymous meetings in the whole Chicagoland area. Of those 12 meetings, there were only 3 women in attendance. In 1991, when gambling expansion began in Illinois, there were 19 total meetings with about a dozen women in attendance. Now, in 2008, there are a startling **57 meetings with 40% women in attendance, and 50% of all first-time members are now women!** This gambling addiction, unlike alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes, is able to prey on all people and age groups, from teenagers up to seniors in their 70s and 80s.

Today, with recent bankruptcy legislation, addicted gamblers are forced to choose one of the following:

1. No longer able to absolve the full amount owed on credit cards and other debts, they will turn to the streets. Crime has increased dramatically as compulsive gamblers are frantic to find new money to solve their financial woes. No bank, business, or home is safe, and casualties have mounted.
2. Payday Loan and Car Title businesses, which are already heavily supported by compulsive gamblers, see even a larger number of victims entering their trap. These 2 predatory businesses have exploded since this current expansion of gambling. Open a new strip mall and usually this will be the first blight to appear. They were not even part of the Illinois landscape until 1997.

3. Finally, illegal street loans by the Mafia, which I mentioned earlier, will be the last resort. These loans and the subsequent pressure exerted by futile inability to repay will result in tragic endings.

I ask, on behalf of all the family members of compulsive gamblers already in the throes of financial ruin, to help stop further destruction. Please do not add to the grip that gambling has on those addicted, like I once was. I plead with you, to vote no on allowing 24 hour gambling to casinos in Illinois. I thank you for allowing me the time to share this with you.

Kathy Gilroy 630-834-0906
230 W. Division St., Unit F
Villa Park, IL 60181

Illinois Gambling Board

4-8-08

Good morning, Chairman Jaffe, members of the Board, and staff. My name is Kathy Gilroy. I speak before you today as a member of the public. I am here to voice my concerns about the prospect of 24-hour gambling at certain Illinois gambling casinos. This issue has been before this Board twice before, and this Board wisely did NOT approve it on either of those occasions.

The obvious question is: Who really wants gambling casinos to be open during the hours that they are now closed? The answer is: only those who have a gambling problem and those who are benefiting from the losses of those with a gambling problem.

When riverboat gambling casinos first opened in Illinois, they were required to cruise for a certain period of time. Gamblers were also required to leave the riverboat at the end of each cruise. The purpose of this policy was to give gamblers a break from the action and the opportunity to leave the casino. It was a safeguard for those with a gambling problem. That safeguard is already gone. Even when cruising was not required any more, gambling casinos maintained the cruise-times and breaks for a period of time. THAT safeguard is also already gone.

At a time when the number of persons in Illinois who have volunteered to be self-excluded from gambling casinos has ballooned to over 5,000, is it really a good time to eliminate any MORE safeguards? I would venture that a high percentage of persons in a gambling casino at closing-time are either on the self-exclusion list already or will shortly BE on it. That means that those couple of hours when the gambling casino is closed are the only safeguard LEFT for them, to stop them from gambling.

Will you be extending the carding of gamblers to all who enter the gambling casinos? If so, you may find that it will not be cost-effective to be open those wee hours of the morning anyway. EXTENDING THE HOURS will only be EXTENDING THE PAIN of those who have a gambling addiction. Please remember your duty to look out for the interests of the public and not just the interests of those who are profiting from their losses.

**Illinois Gaming Board
Special Meeting
April 8, 2008**

24-HOUR GAMING

Twenty four hour gambling at casinos, what is the industry thinking? This would just provide more uninterrupted time for addicted gamblers to lose and lose big. Is there no end to how much casino operators will prey upon their victims?

The state-wide smoking ban was meant to be something good for the health of Illinois residents. But now it looks like determined opportunists want to use this ban to further addict vulnerable people and the state of Illinois to gambling revenue. The state's racetracks are pursuing the same strategy, applying for many new Off Track Betting parlors in bars and restaurants that are pleading declining revenues due to community and county smoking bans and now the state-wide smoking ban. This is the third time casinos have requested 24-hour gambling (earlier requests were in 2003 and 1999).

Since the introduction of riverboat casinos, the gambling industry has played one state against another, citing which neighboring states have eliminated cruising requirements, more lenient regulations, longer hours, etc. Why don't they compete for who has fewer broken families, suicides, home foreclosures, bank robberies, business embezzlements, and less domestic violence? One of the conclusions of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission was that casinos should assume more social responsibility. I propose that Illinois casinos and the Illinois Gaming Board become leaders in becoming more socially responsible. Leave the casino gambling hours what they are now or reduce them to shorter hours.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this issue.

Nancy Duel, Chair
Anti Gambling Task Force
United Methodist Church
Northern Illinois Conference
847-259-3793